THE THREE THINGS

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

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THE FORGE IN WHICH THE SOUL OF A MAN WAS TESTED

BY

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

AUTHOR OF "THE PERFECT TRIBUTE," ETC.

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1917

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Printers
S. J. Parkhill & Co., Boston, U.S.A.

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HIS mother listened, staring out at the colors of the August garden. She had heard such tirades before, but he had never, it seemed, been quite so extreme.

"The President asked us," she put in a word, "to be neutral."

"Neutral!" The boy flung the word back. "Neutral! When it means civilization against barbarism! Gentlemen against Huns; Englishmen and Frenchmen whom we know for straight and clean, against — the unspeakable German! From the Kaiser down — seventy millions of *canaille;* a nation of vulgarians glorified by brains — which can't save 'em." His fist banged on the oak table. "Which can't save 'em from their vulgarity. Breeding is blood, not

brains. I've been in Germany; I know 'em. A beastly swarm of day laborers, the whole lot, high and low."

"Phil," his mother spoke; "'day laborer' is not a term of reproach. It's honorable to work. That's a cheap speech."

The big young fellow bent, standing before her, and patted his mother's slim shoulders. "Beg pardon, Meggy," he said boyishly. "But you know you and I'll never agree on that. I'm for being kind to the proletariat, but I'm not for blinking the fact that they're different. What's progress for, and the sweat of civilization, if we don't get forward with our efforts — if we mark time?"

The boy was off now, and the woman, knowing what was coming, found her mind traveling a bypath parallel — was it? — to this inborn snobbishness of her son. Two people had told her the story; she knew it from two angles; crystallized into pictures it came as the boy talked. First, the man in the corner of the Country Club years ago. He had appeared there, quiet, well-dressed, alone; day after day he had appeared, intruding in no way, having meals at his own little table, the golf in-

structor his only companion, cheerful, quiet, day after day — there. Till the men were nodding to him, and on a day Mrs. Landicutt asked her husband: "Who is that man, Grenny?"

"That's Morton, the oil king. Worth thirty millions. Was a groom in Lord Carlisle's stables, Drayton told me — and he told Drayton. His wife died, and he came over here with his child, and went into the oil fields as a day laborer, and had a chance to buy land and was lucky. In five years he's worth thirty millions. Like a fairy story, isn't it?"

"He's a well-behaved man," Mrs. Landicutt reflected. "He doesn't push."

"He's clever," Grenville Landicutt agreed. "Drayton says he has a gift of breeding. Doesn't push and doesn't make breaks. He's taking it all in, and learning to be a gentleman; that's my theory."

A time came when Philip Morton began to play golf with the men who had nodded to him; began to be presented to their wives; then one day Mrs. Landicutt, the queen bee, asked him, as he came in from thirty-six holes with her husband, to stop for tea. Too thoroughbred, too genuine to

hesitate about liking anyone whom she liked, be he duke or tailor, she came to like him.

Then, on a day, he told her his story, in three short chapters: his love affair and marriage; his wife's death, and despair and loneliness, ending in the new life in America; then sudden, overwhelming wealth.

"It was always my wish to be a gentleman," he explained. "I don't mean rich, but to have the ways and the speech and the — the thoughts of a real gentleman. Do you think I can?" He asked the question wistfully. There certainly was something winning about this ex-groom.

"I think you are a very fine gentleman in some ways now," Mrs. Landicutt told him heartily. Morton flushed. "That's kind of you," he said, "but it isn't what I mean."

"There are better things than just breeding." Mrs. Landicutt, born to the purple, assured him.

"What?"

"Why, to be straight and generous —" She hesitated.

"All that belongs to gentle people naturally," the man spoke, surprised.

"Oh, no — oh, no! And it is far finer to be — really good — than to be just an aristocrat."

He was unconvinced. "Well, you know. But for me, what I want is to be — a gentleman; and for my little girl to be a lady. When she was a baby I used to ride as groom with Lord Carlisle's young daughter, and every time she put her foot in my hand to be mounted, I'd think, 'Some day, my lady, if I can bring it about, my little baby will be such as you are.' I have listened, as I rode behind, to their speech as she talked to her sister or her friends, and I've whispered over the words after them, to learn to speak them proper — properly. She had the voice and the ways of breeding — Lady Maud; but she had not the beauty of my Margaret."

Mrs. Landicutt looked interested. "How old is your daughter?"

"Ten."

"Will you bring her to see me?"

Morton went red. "You are very good," he spoke slowly, and his eyes spoke more. "I shall be — only too glad."

So it happened that Margaret Morton, the daughter of a groom and a lady's maid,

was brought up under the wing of the greatest lady of a great city. Her father had not overrated her beauty; her charm was beyond her beauty. Mrs. Landicutt, childless, grew to care for her as for her own child. When the girl was eighteen she went to England with the Landicutts and was presented at Court and was the sensation of the season for her loveliness and her millions. In the glory of her fine feathers, in her Court dress, she met Everard Landicutt, Grenville Landicutt's cousin, and in five minutes the history of the family had started on a new volume. He was so madly in love that in a week Morton was cabled for, and the wedding was two weeks after.

And behold it was now twenty-four years later, and the people who had made her world then — father, husband, the Grenville Landicutts — had passed over to the majority and her world was this big son of twenty-three, making oration at the moment as to the great war. Suddenly her heart stopped. What was the boy saying?

"Meggy, I'm going. I want to go. Will you let me?"

She stared. He could not be in earnest. She saw the splendid bones and sinews, clear eyes, fresh color, brown, shining hair with the loose lock on the temple which she knew; she saw the loving, headstrong soul and faithful heart of him gazing at her from his eyes. Was she asked to give all this, her heart's blood, to be shot down and thrown aside like junk? She could not have understood.

"What? What, Phil?" He knelt by her and kissed her hand on his face.

"I know it's asking a lot." He bit his lip; stopped a moment. Then words came flooding: "But, oh, Meggy, I've got to! I've tried to stop thinking, but I can't. I've got to go! I couldn't keep on living the rest of my days and remember that this fight had been put up for the decency of the world and I hadn't lifted a finger. I'd be wretched."

Queer things were happening to Margaret Landicutt's heart. It was turning over — and over. Or something physically distressing. "It's not our fight, Phillie; there's no reason — *you* should go." She pushed back the loose lock.

"It *is* our fight. If the Germans should

win, do you suppose they'd stop? Not much. 'World power or downfall.' And we'd be the next bit of world-snatching. And if the Germans should lose and our safety be assured, who would have won it? Not we. We're sitting at ease, letting England and France and Russia — and little, martyred Belgium — fight our battle. That's what!" The young fist came down again. "I won't accept that! If the country won't fight, I will! I'll do my share, as a gentleman ought."

"Listen, Phil." She put a hand each side of the boy's face. "That's not reason. It's not dishonorable if we refuse to take sides in a quarrel which we have no share in making; no, not if the quarrel may have vital results for us. It's not dishonorable to accept good which may come; no, even if we have not lifted a finger to help. It is honorable, it is right, to keep our country safe; to keep sane the only great country that is not in this madness. We must be the nucleus of a made-over world. Who's to feed the starving, who are to be the peacemakers, if we go mad too?"

The boy sprang to his feet. "I can't see it, Meggy. I can only see that I must

go and whack at those canting hounds who are wiping out little Belgium. Blood and fire and terror — 'with the help of God!' If there was a God, how He'd —"

"Phil!"

He stopped. "Meggy, I'm sorry. I wish I could see it as you want. But I can't. It's odd, with you and me such friends and so agreed about slithers of things, that we're all apart on two or three big ones. You believe in the masses — I don't take stock in the great unwashed. Yes, I remember your father — my grandfather — but he was different — and you're a great lady. Then, you're rather deeply religious, and I'm a plain unbeliever; you're generous enough to look for good in all humanity, even in the Germans, and I'm sure they're a nation of swine. We're different, Meggy, and I have to live my own life — my own life!" the boy cried, standing before her, brilliant, tempestuous.

A breeze stirred the rows of pink phloxes in the garden; a stumbling bumblebee banged heavily against the glass of the open French door, and buzzed away into silence. Fragrance of mignonette was blown into the large, dim library. Ever after the woman

could not smell mignonette without remembering that hour.

The boy must live his own life. What right had she to keep him? Who knew what was waiting of strength and illumination on this road which he strained at the leash to follow? Likely death was waiting; not the less it was his life.

There came to her suddenly what perhaps most women whose boys go to war must feel: a sense of the incidental quality of human life. What are a few years more or less if one plays the game? A great thing like a son was not given for mere years; she and Phil were to go on, comrades, lovers, for eternity. To her mind it was certain. So — if he went to his death, that ended her life on earth. But what of it? An incident in eternity. She lifted her head high, sat straight and smiled.

"Yes, Phil, you'll have to go. I'll help you."

* * * * * * *

The second man down the trenches was of a religious turn of mind. He was also a crack shot; his rifle had been laid for hours on a picked low spot in the earthworks, not one hundred yards away. A

German soldier attempted with too little caution to wriggle past that spot; a bullet sped. The helmeted head went down with a suddenness which told the story.

Albert Mullins propped his Bible on the parapet in front of him and began reading aloud. The first time he had done this there had been jokes; the second time men had tried to howl him down; in both cases he read straight along. He read in the measured, overemphasized fashion of the man of few books. "'The Lord *is* my light and *my* salvation; whom *shall* I fear?'" inquired Albert Mullins loudly. "'The Lord is *the* strength *of* my life; of whom shall I be afraid?'"

Philip grinned, then listened curiously. It was odd that this ancient, outworn book should still, after the centuries, have a manner of magic to help men through trouble. Auto-suggestion, a phase of psychology; he turned to look at Lefty.

Suppose lines and lines of trenches, each somewhere near six feet in depth, a labyrinth open to the sky; suppose in the walls of them holes, like graves, straw-bedded, a hole to each man; suppose, living there, human beings, mud-covered, almost inhuman to

look at, firing day and night, with intervals, at other human beings, a hundred yards away, living, dying, killing, much the same.

Every moment there are bullets about; many like a suddenly risen wind shrieking; some making a noise of large and obnoxious mosquitoes; some cracking like whips; some groaning; shrapnel bursts around most of the time. To a highstrung temperament it is living in an inferno. One goes mad there time and again. One stays there for two days, three days; one is relieved for four days; then back again. That is life in the trenches; that is the business at which hundreds of thousands of men are occupying themselves at present.

Philip turned to look at Lefty. Lefty was sitting on a box in the bottom of the trench, quite casual about the roar of artillery, mending Philip's stockings. What would he have done without Lefty? From the first day in the concentration camp on Salisbury Plain the big Englishman had taken the American boy under his wing. Philip had been amused, tolerant, grateful. Lefty had modified some theories. There was such a thing, Philip admitted now, as a low-bred man with well-bred qualities;

of course it was a "sport" example, like a puppy with points in a litter of mongrels.

The man, late chauffeur to Lord Athol, at whose place in Gloucestershire Philip had visited, recognized him. "Mr. Landicutt, sir," he said at once, touching his cap groom fashion.

Philip had written to his mother that she would be pleased to see him growing democratic; that Tommy Athol's chauffeur was his best friend — all the time superbly scornful of the friendship. Yet, as he looked at Lefty darning away — expert, lefthanded — at the socks, it came to him, was he scornful now? And then, shock on shock, would not a fellow be a cad to keep such an attitude toward such a man? In a rush he remembered the Lefty of the last months, all resource, unselfishness, capability, everlasting bright courage; did he know many, any, men of his own class who might come out of such an ordeal with such a record?

He thought of Cyrano de Bergerac and his gorgeous last speech, of how when he came to appear before high heaven he would bring a thing with him which a stain had not touched — *ma plume.* Lefty would be quite

inadequate to make fine speeches about himself or his "feather"; all the same, if a German shot took him he would have his unstained plume as much as Cyrano. Philip laughed; he was building a castle around this son of the lower classes, whose very name he did not know. That idea struck him.

"Lefty, have you got a name for yourself?"

"Sure, sir." Lefty stuck in his mouth his finger where the needle pricked it.

"What?"

"Lefty, sir."

"Oh, well, little soldier-man, if you don't want to tell. I was thinking it was queer, being partners, that I don't know your right name. That's all."

Lefty grinned up at him. "Very good, me lord." "Me lord" was nonsense, as both understood, but the implied acknowledgment of social status appealed to Philip; he accepted it cheerfully. "Glad to tell you. Right nyme's Philip Morton, sir."

"*What?*"

Lefty glanced up. "Philip Morton," he pronounced distinctly. "Nyme of my father's brother, wot went to America and made his pile. 'E sent t' old man a lot o'

money oncet. They wasn't partiklar friends, but when 'e made his pile 'e sent t' old man two thousand pounds. And t' old man nymed me arfter 'im and lost t' money inside a year. So I'm all t' monymint there is to Philip Morton of America, this side t' ocean. I dunno wot's t' other side."

"Didn't you ever write and tell him about being named for him?" asked Philip.

"Not me, me lord," said Lefty. "Wot'd I do snivelin' arfter a rich gentleman? I suppose he were a gentleman in America; he were only a common man in England; groom to Lord Carlisle down in Hampshire."

Philip stared. In a few sentences Lefty had identified the American uncle as his own grandfather. Which made them cousins; Lefty, who addressed him as "sir" and dropped his *h*'s; Lefty, the cockney chauffeur, was first cousin to that *grande dame*, his mother.

Philip started in sudden distaste. His comrade in the trenches, his faithful henchman, was a great old chap; but after all it was instinct in these people to serve their betters. Betters? That word jarred; how would Lefty regard that point if he knew that "me lord" was his cousin? Philip's

nerves bristled; it would be idiotic to tell him; the combination would be ruined; Lefty would be embarrassed, and so would he; the comradeship on a basis of things as they really were would be gone, and neither would know the repartee. Much better to keep quiet.

"'Appen to know my gentleman uncle, sir?" inquired Lefty. "I thought t' nyme seemed to strike you, like. But, then, even in America you'd 'ardly know that sort — a real gentleman like you."

Philip had the grace to be uncomfortable as he accepted this tribute. Yet he stuck to his decision; it would be futile to tell Lefty.

"The name did strike me; I've heard it; my — your — uncle was well known; rich and respected. He's dead now. He did come to be — a gentleman."

"Lor' bless 'is ole 'eart, did he?" Lefty inquired. "Well, I fahncy 'e never got quite t' thing; not like you, me lord. One 'as to be born to the manners, they say. 'E was a bit cracked about bein' a gentleman, as I've 'eard my father tell, so I'm glad 'e got 'is wish as it might be. Odd 'ow you'd 'eard 'is nyme now, wasn't it? The socks

is done." And in the subject of his American uncle Lefty showed no more interest.

Philip laid his rifle with care across the protecting sandbags and began firing. In between shots he heard Albert Mullins, the Wesleyan, in even tones droning from his Bible propped on the parapet: "'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.'" The crack of Albert Mullins' rifle; Philip, peering between two sandbags, saw another man fall in that pet gap of Mullins'.

With that, along in an hour or so came an order to be ready to charge the opposing earthworks; shells from three miles back had thinned out the Germans holding them, so that it seemed possible that one might advance the lines by a hundred yards. In the zigzag trenches that connected with the front, that led back through a honeycombed stretch, men began to mass, to pour up forward closer and closer, like streams in springtime flooding into a pond. Then the pond overflowed.

A word of command; they were scrambling over the sandbags, rushing the field, dashing along with bullets singing about, around, close now to the other trench. Then over

the edge of it came, crawling, springing, swarming, the Germans, gray uniforms bristling with shining things — rifles, bayonets.

It was all so busy, so impersonal, so deadly quick that the only thought Philip was conscious of, outside of an intense interest in the glittering bayonets, was a comforting feeling that Lefty was close, touching him now and again; Lefty, whistling through his teeth in a fashion he had when excited. Suddenly there was a heavy bump on his leg, on his forehead at the same second; then a sting like a hornet's sting. He found himself swaying; things were a long way — off ——

When he came to he was on the back of a man who was trotting, headed to a clump of bushes. It hurt hideously to be joggled; he groaned; then was aware that the man whistled through his teeth — Lefty. They were almost at the bushes — they were there, when the man under him staggered; they pitched forward into shelter — the two — and Philip, lifting on his elbow, saw Lefty pulling at his coat where blood flowed. At that suddenly he was frantic. "Lefty, you're wounded — you saved me and they shot you! Butchers, swine! Lefty, I can't — bear it ——"

The man twisted a smile. "Don't worrit, sir. I don't grudge it. But if they wouldn't 'a' potted me that second we'd 'a' got off. Too bad. We'd 'a' 'ad some more nice times, me lord."

Philip, shaky with wounds, crawled to the big Englishman, put his arm under his head. "Lefty, listen — take this in: I'm not 'me lord' or 'sir' to you. I'm your cousin — get that, Lefty? Your uncle was my grandfather. I'm Philip Morton Landicutt. The same name as yours — cousins — get that, old Lefty? I was a cad not to tell you before."

Lefty, with startled eyes on Philip's face, held himself back strongly from the thunder of waters that were sweeping him over a drop into an unknown ocean, waters so near that even now their mighty beat dulled his hearing. For the sake of his love to this man he held himself with his strength steady to hear him.

"Cousins? You and me be — cousins, sir?"

"Lefty, don't call me 'sir,'" pleaded Philip. "All that's rot, class and such. It's only people that count." Was it Philip saying it? "Anyhow we're — the same flesh

and blood; cousins; the same name, Lefty, you and I. Do you hear? Will you forgive me?"

"Forgive? W'y, I've nothin' to forgive. The other ways 'round. I'm dyin' 'appy — to think we sort of belong to each other, sir — same bloomin' nyme. Good of you to tell me — most gentlemen would 'a' kep' it. You've been good to me — from the first. I 'ope you'll remember me a bit. Cousins — that's grand news for a man to — die with! God bless ——" The strong will suddenly stopped trying to hold back the thunder of the waters; Lefty had slipped over the drop and was out upon the unknown ocean.

Through his life Philip remembered each moment of that day, as it may be a martyr remembers his ordeal; a memory not to be exchanged for all the happy days of a life. He lay as still as the dead, his arm around the dead, his eyes closed, light-headed now and then from the pain of his wounds. The slow hours ground over him as an ancient glacier may have ground over a hillside, carving it.

At first, when Lefty died before his eyes, he had been half mad; he had caught the

limp hands; he had talked to him; had rubbed his hands, and pleaded with him to look at him only once, to listen while he told him all the untold things which one would give one's life to say when it is just too late.

But Lefty did not listen; for the first time words of Philip's meant nothing to this humble friend.

Then the boy had broken down, and, with his head on the quiet heart, he had cried as he had not cried in years. After a while, the sobs worn past, he set himself to remember, so that he would never forget, what Lefty had been. He went over the three months of comradeship, and at the end asked himself which had been the finer gentleman, Philip Morton, with breeding and opportunity, or this — the eyes turned to the still figure were blinded so that he could not see his friend — this common man?

With his head against Lefty's shoulder he made up his mind to a thing which meant much to him, which he offered as a thank offering for this beautiful short friendship.

"Lefty," whispered Philip into the stained uniform — "Lefty, you get this? I promise on my honor for your sake all my life to

judge people as people, to throw class prejudice away for junk. Lefty, you've humbled me to the dust, you who put me on a pedestal. I'm a pitiful object beside you ——" A sob cut through, and with it words came to Philip's mind: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends!"

"'Greater love,'" sobbed Philip into the brown sleeve, his arm across the broad body. "'Greater love' — 'no man' — that's straight, old Lefty. I won't forget that. I'll — I'll try to make up to some other chaps who haven't a chance. That's all I can do. And I'll do it."

In the furnace of those hours the steel of a character was forged. It was good stuff tried by fire that day; the boy would not forget.

The tide of battle rolled past; at first shrapnel scattering, the long, high whistle and the explosions of bursting shells, a hideously gay sputter of machine guns, and cracking of many rifles. Then by degrees only artillery booming in the distance; only a shell groaning past at intervals.

Philip did not care. His arm around Lefty, he lay quiet, and death would have found

him unresentful. But death did not come; instead, Red Cross nurses came at twilight and discovered the two clasped under the sheltering bushes and lifted them tenderly, Philip moaning, half-conscious, as they parted them.

For some weeks, that was all. Then a new Philip, gaunter, grimmer, was ready to go back to the front; his wounds had been light.

* * * * * * *

Poor little Dixmude, worried by harrying armies, caught in the claws now of the Allies, now of the Germans, torn by shot and shell whichever way, lay silent for a moment in the sunlight of the autumn day. Heaps of brick and mortar blocked what had been trim streets; sullen smoke curled where a housewife had kept her *ménage;* the sofa of the best room, which the housewife had saved her earnings to pay for — the milk of the cow, the vegetables out of the garden — which she had saved for five years; the sofa sat pertly, new and unscarred, in a room without a ceiling, in the reek of the futile smoke.

The thrifty, smiling housewife and her man — who knows where they were? Wan-

dering, starving, if not shot down in wantonness.

With his regiment Philip marched into Dixmude; the Allies held it this morning. He marked these things, marching; one saw enough without turning the head unduly. Then, as the column swung around the corner, he caught, down the ruined street, a sudden antiphonal glitter and shadow of sunlight on steel; a column of Uhlans had almost surprised them.

With that, orders rang; a machine gun was set up; men scattered into houses to fight from cover; in five minutes a savage, close battle was raging, and Philip, firing from a window, saw that the English force slowly fell back. The Germans were thicker, easier marks in front of his ambushed window; he kept on firing; till suddenly he was aware that he was alone in a town held by the enemy, and it might even now be too late to escape capture. He sprang back into the room, into the arms of a motherly person in full, short skirts, of an anguished face.

"Hurry — hurry, dear lad!" she adjured him in French. "One will search the house; one will kill us as well if you are found. This

way — *voici!*" He was at a back stairway. "Two flights," whispered the old Belgian. "A trap door. One pushes the red plank — *voilà!* Hurry, then!"

Springing up, he found the red plank; he was through the trap door and in a manner of hidden room in the loft. Safe enough, he considered, if one kept still, and if one might ever get out again. He stole to the only window. The window looked out on wide fields, and pouring into the fields were company after company of never-ending gray uniforms, infantry and cavalry.

Philip sprang backward, realizing that out of all those one enemy might glance at the attic window. It was dark in the corners of the little attic; he stared in safety at the shifting field of soldiery. When suddenly his pulse jumped. From the shadows on the floor something clung to his feet. He turned his eyes down with a dread of what he might see. What he saw was the back of a golden head with two heavy braids of bright hair.

The child's face was hidden against his muddy shoes. He bent and loosened the hands and lifted her — a girl of sixteen or seventeen, tall, slim as a young tree. She

stood staring at him from luminous dark eyes incongruous with the bright hair.

The two stared; the girl's eyes wandered to the window, to that field full of color and motion. She flashed a gesture, whispered something.

"What?" Philip asked.

"A pistol — have you a pistol?" She moistened her lips, gasping.

"But, yes." They were talking in French. Another gesture.

"Will you please shoot me before ——" The frightened eyes wandered again — full of horror — to that flooding river of German soldiers.

Philip's young mouth set; his hand went to his revolver. "Yes," he said, "I'll shoot you."

It was a strange, quiet, long day; a day which seemed to the boy to be something read about in a book, not possibly happening in reality to an American lad out of a happy and commonplace background of school and college and home.

The two in the attic room dared not stir for fear that a sound in the deserted house might be heard by prowling Germans searching all day for the men who had fought them

from these village houses. Several times parties of soldiers entered and went about noisily through the rooms below, some businesslike and well-behaved, some slamming doors, firing into walls, crashing the poor furniture. All alike meant ruin to the two breathless in the hidden room.

When the house seemed empty they talked a little in whispers, listening between sentences. The girl told him a story. Her father was in the Belgian Army; she had signaled day after day to his regiment from the windmill on her father's land; she had told by signs news of the German movements. One day she had seen the patrol come galloping, and had barely escaped, crawling through ditches; had been passed from house to house by neighbors who risked life to protect her; had seen the home where she had been born burned to the ground.

She bent her bright head in her hands. "My mother," she whispered; "the two little brothers — they were not wicked. The mother was lame; they knew she could not have climbed to signal, and the boys were too small. I saw them killed."

The tragic eyes stared. "There is yet the father." The luminous look flashed to

Philip. "He is wonderful, the father — not like others. He studies; he knows everything; he makes me study also, and think, and live for the things that count. He says that. So — I must live — for him. While he is alive there is — something left."

The slim figure straightened; Philip noticed that the child was tall. "I am not a coward," she stated. "I also can die for Belgium. I am not afraid of being shot. I knew that might be when I signaled. But" — the dark glance wandered out of the window to the gray, glittering ranks overflowing the fields — "you'll shoot me — first?" she whispered. And again Philip promised.

The day wore on. And toward evening shells began to whistle overhead; to explode now and then in the poor little harried town of Dixmude. There was the rumble, the crashing and tearing, of falling walls; once the very dust of masonry came in a cloud through the one window of the hidden room in the loft, where Philip and the tall, fair-haired Belgian girl had been in hiding since morning, and almost choked them. It was not so much better to be killed

by one's friends than by one's enemies, Philip reflected; the English were shelling the town. Then, far down the streets, one heard the noise of an engagement, the levity of the machine guns, rifle shots, shouts of men, and once, dignified to a stern courage, the air of "A Long, Long Way to Tipperary," in a menacing chant as they marched on the German column.

A roar of sharp battle, and "Tipperary" went under. But not the English advance; the two, listening dry-lipped, came to know that the war-torn village had changed masters again.

They lifted the trap door and hurried down the steep stairs. The old peasant woman of the full skirts lay dead at the foot of the lower flight. Philip lifted her and laid her on her own bed, and bent and kissed her mouth. "For Meggy," he whispered. Then he caught the girl's hand and they stood in the door of the house as the first English lines came by.

The girl was safe in the hands of the Red Cross before he left her that night, and, as he told her good-by, a thought struck him. He scribbled hastily in a notebook and tore out a sheet:

"You might — want to go to America. This is a word to my mother. She would look after you if you gave her this."

The child smiled at him for the first time, a radiant, adoring smile.

"One has the father," she said proudly. And then: "M'sieur is good." She took the paper; the bright head bent quickly, and she kissed his hand.

As he swung away, Philip rubbed the back of his hand, where her lips had touched, against his trousers. Nasty feeling, to have your hand kissed. Yet there was a warmth about his heart which had not been there since the day Lefty was killed, and suddenly he was singing.

* * * * * *

The Germans held the Yser; the regiment was ordered to cross. This was three days after the episode in Dixmude; Philip had forgotten about Dixmude, about the girl. One has small time to remember, soldiering. One obeys orders, eats, fights; between times one drops dead. Living is the utmost the human machine can accomplish in that life of superhuman strain. The regiment marched toward the canal, and Philip was aware only that there was a

thing to do and that he was there to do it; alive only to the fact that at any moment he must be ready to fight.

And with that the air was full of the singing sound which he had come to know well, and out of the trenches, across the narrow stream, poured a torrent of never-ending gray uniforms; one was attacking with the bayonet. On the banks, in the water, one attacked, one defended, one fought, trampled, pushed, plunged through as if a human life were a clot of mud to be used only for reaching that bank over there a few yards away, a few hundred lives away.

They were bayoneted, thrown down, trampled into a bridge, the boys with mothers at home, men with wives, trampled into a bridge for the crossing of a mad multitude behind.

Philip, a berserk in his young fury — roaring, clean mad — reached the bank over that horrible bridge; reached it and fought on — his regiment at his side — beyond, priceless yards beyond; and fell. Fell and felt no pain; only, struggle as he might, he could not rise; something did not connect; the muscles that had been steel springs, if steel there might be vividly aware of power,

these same muscles gave no answer to his frantic commands.

He lay, and the fight streamed. The British pushed on, on. Rifle shots filled the air; artillery boomed far off; shells burst close; men whirled, fell dead. White, innocent puffs of shrapnel rose in the distance; one heard the curious whistling as it came near; men fell; the ground was heaps of fallen men. He saw them, heard them, and slowly with his ebbing blood, the delirium of battle ebbed, and he knew these were men, hurt.

Then a figure stepped into the scene which might have come from a medieval romance — hawk-nosed, dusky, sorrowful-eyed, dressed in a long black cassock, a black skullcap on the white long hair. The Jew worked his way among the fallen figures, peering into faces, looking for men of his race to help. "Water!" gasped a wounded Irishman, and the Rabbi drew out a flask and lifted the man's head as he drank. The man saw the black dress. His fast-dimming eyes made no fine distinctions.

"Father," he whispered — "crucifix."

Philip saw the Rabbi start; from somewhere a hand held out something; the

long fingers caught it, and with Terence O'Shaughnessey's head heavy against his breast he held high the sign of a faith not his, before dying eyes. And as he held it yet another shell burst above the battle-field, and the Rabbi lay dead, the dead Irish-man in his arms and the cross of Christ gripped in his hand. So all faiths are the same in death, and the greatest of them all is love.

Then to the American boy the world darkened and went under, and for many hours he knew nothing, and a day passed and a night before the tenacious life in him came on top and his eyes opened. Clouds swept across a low sky. He opened his eyes on them, facing up, lying across an uneven surface; opened them wide on angry clouds reeling over the sky.

He was conscious that he was conscious; it was as if never in his life had he been conscious before; it was as if all his years had been played on a top layer of existence, and now his personality had dived into a reality, a terror, a glory of living — and he knew it. The Philip of his young years, his only self so far, seemed removed from him; he was himself, but himself was something

he had not known. The universe was spinning, yet in the center he was firm in that strange, profound, ecstatic agony of himself.

With that he heard a voice speaking through his lips — his voice? Yes, and yet a thing beyond himself was saying the words. These were words he had heard time on time in long-ago years when he went to church, a little lad, and held his mother's hand, his head against his mother's shoulder. The voice spoke. It was loud and slow and clear, this voice that spoke from his lips; the words came in a manner of chant:

"Out of the depths have I called unto Thee, O Lord," the voice spoke. "O Lord, hear my voice." And again that strange loud chant of the age-old words: "Out of the depths — O Lord, hear my voice."

The unevenness under him heaved — groaned. Philip's staring eyes coming from the sky gazed about. There were men everywhere; piled up, hundreds of men. He was lying on men heaped on each other. There were limp forms — sprawled, twisted, doubled up; there were writhing, hiccoughing, moaning figures; there were horrible bleeding things too awful for human eyes; Philip stared at them all calmly. There

was no emotion in him; the shock of his wound had knocked out all that. And again came from his lips that unearthly, detached intoning:

"Out of the depths have I called unto Thee, O Lord —"

"Damn — damnation! A thousand damnations on your sniveling, lying preaching!" screamed a man, struggling halfway from under two dead men. "There isn't any God. Hell — I know it! There's hell, and this is it. If I could get back and kill — kill —" the voice broke into a cough. But it went on again: "If there was a God could there be — this? There's only hell, and I'd like to send more Germans into it to suffer as I'm suffering!"

"Out of the depths," Philip's chant began again, calm, unmoved; and the man yelled like a wild thing across the words. But somewhere in the dreadful assembly, yards away, another voice had caught, repeated them:

"Out of the depths have I called unto Thee, O Lord," the weaker, strained tones were answering, and yet another, gasping, and still another came into the solemn choir: "O Lord, hear my voice."

Then from somewhere through the groans rose sonorously a trained chant, the chant of a singer in a cathedral:

"*De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine* —" and behold from all about men's voices followed him, strained, broken, calling from the last ditch upon their God.

Suddenly Philip's stunned nerves burst into horrible life; he was suffering as he had never thought of suffering; he was awake, back in his normal consciousness, yet the words which he had been saying held him still; and with that he was praying. The men about him meant nothing; this was prayer at its most real. He needed desperately what he asked for, and that he had not believed in God before was not more to him than a straw in the wind. He knew now; from that bottomless consciousness which had flowed into him, out of the depths he knew.

"O God!" he prayed — and though he did not know it, prayed aloud — "O God, save me. Give me back my life. So that I can use it for Your work. I will. Help me. Save me. God help us all."

And with that there was a mad, unthinkable sound — the man who had screamed

curses; he was sobbing so terribly that even in that awful spot Philip's heart stood still.

"There is a God," he broke out, shaking, writhing, sobbing horribly. "I have to give in. Ask him to — to help — me. I believe — O God!" The arms flung up; he was dead. And with that Philip's shivering consciousness lapsed again.

When he came to himself the next time he lay comfortably in sheets. He turned his head; all about were narrow white beds; a hospital. It was peace; peace and comfort and cleanliness; he was too weak to want more; contentment held him. Drowsily he saw a nurse with a red cross on her cap moving toward him; he shut his eyes for fear she might speak to him; the effort of a word, of a smile, was to be avoided.

So he lay for an hour, three hours, feigning unconsciousness from sheer dread of taking on his weak shoulders the least fingerweight of the burden of living. One had crowded a good bit of living into those days before the fight on the Yser; there was a margin to his credit; one had no desire for activity yet awhile. But inevitably life began to pulse back. A vague interest dawned in the other narrow beds, in what the nurses and the

doctors were doing to the men in them, in the men.

Tentatively he moved his hands; they were right; eyes unhurt too — that was a miracle of joy; he tried to turn on his side and agony caught every nerve in his body. "It's not done," Philip whispered, trembling, smiling oddly; one had found the weak spot; he lay still and his eyes wandered to the bed next. A boy was there of perhaps seventeen years, fair-haired and fresh-faced; looking, amid the whiteness, like a child. "What a shame!" Philip thought from the height of his twenty-three years.

The boy's eyes were closed, and with that he began to talk in his sleep — to talk German. A spasm of disgust caught the American; he shook with the repulsion which the sound of the language stirred in him. "The unspeakable German!" he whispered. The sleeping boy murmured on. The ward was quiet; only a nurse's dress rustled as she moved, yards away; Philip, who had a knowledge of German, could not help listening to the boy.

"The mother," he said, "she should not come so on a battlefield. It is no place for women. *Ach!* I'm a thickhead; it is not a

battlefield; see — the orchard; the little sister coming home. Gretel! Her braid is caught in the rose bush — wait, child. Careless *Mädchen*, to tear the good, yellow hair. Down, Nagler! How the foolish dog is glad to see thee back from school! — *Ach!*"

The boy stirred, woke, set his teeth as he twisted with the pain that had wakened him; smiled through the pain into Philip's eyes.

But not yet could the American smile back at one of the accursed. He turned his head away. He heard a sigh and the catch of a moan; the boy's wound had hurt him. Philip was not cold-blooded; the cry pluckily smothered, the picture of the blond head among the pillows, of youth and suffering and courage, hurt him also, yet he turned without a sign of sympathy.

In the bed on the other side lay a man of fifty-five or so, grizzled, haggard. Dark eyes under heavy brows gleamed at the ceiling. Philip, looking, saw that the man's face was concentrated in endurance. The muscles were rigid; it seemed that with one ounce more of pain the will must break and he would scream. But the will held, and slowly the muscles relaxed; the spasm has passed. A nurse came.

"Ah," she said reproachfully, "you should have called me, Baron! I could have given you a hypodermic. Why didn't you send?"

The man was shaking with what he had been through. "Pardon, nurse," he said. "You were — busy."

And Philip tossed up a hand in distaste — the man spoke English perfectly, but his accent was German. He shut his eyes then and looked to neither right nor left; he, the German-hater, who had come three thousand miles to help punish the "race of *canaille*," lay between two Germans.

The quiet hours went on. Pain, peace, hope, endurance, despair; these were about him, were with him in his narrow white bed. His own suffering, as long as he lay still, was not severe, but at any movement of his body the wound in the hip was fire and knives.

Then behold there was a letter, an event of excitement and joy, a letter from his mother. The nurse lifted his head on two pillows, and as he read his face brightened, softened with the changing storm of interest; he did not know that the man on his right was watching. It was a long letter; as he finished the first sheet he tucked it under the pillow, and an edge caught and he reached with his left hand

to free it, and the two other sheets fell and blew close to the bed of the German officer.

Philip almost cried. There was no nurse near; could he bear it to wait till some one came? Might not the precious papers even blow away and get lost? It was bitter to lie there and see that scrap of home in reach, yet beyond his power to reach.

Suddenly the grizzled, massive head in the next bed lifted: a bony arm went overboard and caught the papers and held them out; the glance of the two met: Philip's young, unforgiving glance and the composed, older look.

"It would be too bad to lose your mother's letter under these circumstances," spoke the officer in easy English.

Philip's eyes widened. "Thank you very much," he said coldly.

He read on absorbed; as the end came he was aware of a stir; there were nurses bending over the Prussian officer. "You must not ever do it again," one was saying. "I saw you reach and bend. It might have killed you. It was madness."

The other nurse injected something into the knotted arm. Philip saw that the man was in the grip of another attack of frightful pain.

"It was madness," the first nurse repeated.

The officer looked up; his face was drawn; black lines were under his eyes; the nurse wiped away sweat. He looked up at her haggardly, whimsically. "The boy wanted — his mother's letter," he whispered.

Philip, the letter clasped under the bedclothes, shut his eyes and thought; a long time he thought. First of his mother; of that sunny afternoon in the big library at home, with the pink phloxes outside and the bee buzzing in at the open window. Of the three things which he had specified on which they could never be agreed — class pride, religion, race prejudice. Of class pride; he thought of that and then of Lefty; he had buried that in Lefty's unknown grave; that was wiped out.

Then he thought about his unbelief; he considered the hour of consciousness on the field by the Yser canal; that voice, his and not his, which had spoken adherence to a belief; that strange choir of the dying which had chanted faith and hope out of the depths; his own prayer and his promise if he were saved to live his life for the Lord's work.

He considered how something had happened there which transcended his cocksure

atheism of a college student; he had got to the profounder places of life and found there — God. Yes, unbelief was wiped out too. That was the second thing on which he and his mother had differed, as he thought, irretrievably. Those two were wiped off the slate.

Now he was facing the third. Christianity had gentleness for everything alive. His mother could believe in such a thing as a good German. And he? His heart, for all of his young, set mouth, was soft to the man who had risked death gallantly to do a kind deed for an alien enemy. Like a blacksmith's hammer on red iron that thought wrought at his softened soul and bent it painfully into a shape not expected.

It came to him that this was the first test of the promise made on the battlefield; the first fight to carry under his flag of faith. "Forgive your enemies" — that was the command. One lives on deep levels, one takes sharp turns in a time like war; Philip, in a shock of clear vision, saw that the *noblesse oblige* of his old code as much as loyalty to his vow asked one thing of him and asked it now. He turned his head, shot his hand toward the Prussian officer.

"I want to thank you, and to tell you how sorry I am," he threw at him. "It was wonderful of you to make yourself that suffering. I'd gladly have taken the suffering." Was this Philip talking to a German?

The officer shifted his look slowly till it rested on Philip's face. "The attack was of little importance," he said quietly. "One gets used ——" he stopped. "You wanted the letter."

"How did you know it was from my mother?" Philip demanded impetuously.

The officer smiled. "I have boys of my own," he said simply.

"It was wonderful of you," Philip repeated, a bit unevenly; and then: "We are — enemies, of course, but" — smiling, embarrassed — "it's 'Love your enemies,' don't you know; and — that was an awfully white thing you did. Would you — could you without hurting yourself — shake hands with me, sir, and — and be friends?"

The grizzled head turned farther and the deep eyes of a scholar stared into Philip's. "You have conquered two enemies, my lad, in these five minutes," the German spoke; "I saw your look when I gave you the letter; it was not friendly. You have conquered

yourself. And I am" — he laughed a little — "ah, youth and charm and generous blood! I also am the captive of your bow and spear." The strong fingers went out and the clasp that held the hands together was not for time, perhaps, but for a peaceful eternity.

Philip wakened that midnight to the sound of a low rhythm; he turned his head toward his new friend; the officer lay as usual with the cavernous, shining eyes of him gazing upward as if at vistas seen through the white-washed hospital ceiling; he was repeating words in English, over and over, in a burring soft whisper; it was as if an organ far off were played in a wood. The boy listened.

And all through life I see a cross —

the Prussian officer repeated —

Where sons of God yield up their breath;
There is no gain except by loss;
There is no life except by death;
There is no vision but by faith;
Nor glory but by bearing shame;
Nor justice but by taking blame.

Philip went to sleep to the low sound of that soldier's creed in the deep, brave, gentle voice. And as his eyes opened in the morning they met the blue gaze of the German lad

watching him wistfully. Philip smiled. The boy's face shone.

"I hope your wound is not very bad," said Philip.

"*Ach*, no — a nothing," the boy answered. "A foot only."

"Will you — will you rejoin your command?"

"No," the lad said. "One will not walk decently again."

"You'll be sent home?"

"*Ach*, yes."

Philip drew a breath of relief. "I'm glad," he said.

The childlike eyes inquired, understood. Then: "It is a shame for the Fatherland to lose a soldier when I am unhurt otherwise. But ——"

"But what?" Philip asked curiously.

Now the innocent blue eyes asked questions of Philip's eyes, then suddenly trusted the older boy. "I do not know if it is wrong," the German lad confided, "but the terrible noise and dirt and blood to me seem ugly. Also not useful. I hate it. It is heavenly to think that I may honorably go back to the mother and the farm and the little sister. One foot — it is a small price. And perhaps

I may some day be the Herr Oberschaffner, or the Herr Stadt-Musik Direktor — for I know a little my music — because of being wounded for the Fatherland. I am lucky." He wriggled about in the bed. "But even so the foot troubles. It seems not to understand that it is lucky." Beads of perspiration stood on the smooth forehead, but the lad grinned. This little soldier was no coward.

"The pain will pass," said Philip, and he put out a hand — a hand to a German fighting man.

The boy caught the hand, crushed it in his grip of a peasant. "Mein Herr is very good." He had not missed the caste of the American.

A throb of pain, a memory, pulled at Philip's soul — Lefty. "Do not bother about 'mein Herr,' lad," he spoke quietly. "We're all brothers here."

"*Danke, Bruder,*" smiled the little fellow, and from that on Philip was called "brother" quite simply by a German common soldier.

So he lay in his white bed, between his two friends, in the midst of tragedy and suffering and personal pain a plenty, and was happy. But one is not kept in a field hospital long. With his friends yet to east and west of him it was ordered that the American should be

sent to England. The wound in the hip was healing, but the same shell had done something to a great knot of muscles below the knee, and the doctor told him briskly that the bursa was gravely injured and that it was a question if he would ever walk "decently," as the German boy put it, again. Not for a year or two at best. So he was honorably discharged.

There were people in England anxious to be good to him, and into their hands he was delivered, a skeleton on crutches, in the early spring. It was late May before the ocean crossing could be considered, and on a June afternoon he hobbled for the first time into the wide, quiet library at home, windows being open and roses blowing pink where pink phloxes had blown last August. They sat on the great sofa, the boy and his mother, hand in hand, and said nothing contentedly.

Then by slow stages, a little at a time, they fell to talking, till after a while the boy had told about Lefty and the field of the Yser and the two enemies in the hospital cots who had so become his friends that his voice wavered and stopped as he told. He had lived, this boy; he had got down to realities.

"Meggy, the three things which I specified as being different forever for you and me — I've come around to you on all of them. I was a narrow cad, don't you know; but I've learned my lesson and I'll try my darnedest to remember it. I paid — fairly high for that lesson," the boy considered.

"I did, too," spoke softly the woman who had stayed at home. She looked at him, the same boy as last August. The young bloom gone, jaw squared, lean cheeks colorless, hollow eyes shining with a new look, intense, at peace; a soul had come into its own. "Out of the depths," the boy's mother spoke and could speak no more.

Leaving the things unsaid which need no saying she drew a long breath and began in another tone: "There's one friend of yours you haven't told me about."

"Huh?" Philip demanded.

"The Belgian girl you saved in Dixmude."

"By gum!" remarked Philip. "I forgot all about her. How did you know? Did I write you? Anyhow, I didn't save her; we only stuck in the attic."

"She thinks you saved her."

"She thinks ——" Philip's eyes widened.

"She's here."

"Here?" He certainly was surprised. "You mean she came over — to you?"

"Her father was killed. She had no one left. You had given her a note to me."

"I remember."

"Did you think that note, in pencil, on a torn scrap of paper, from you — did you think it would mean nothing to me?"

"Meggy! You looked after her? You lamb! Was she a horrid nuisance?"

Margaret Landicutt hesitated. "She's — I think she is the most heavenly human being I've ever seen."

"You don't say." Philip was pleased but not greatly interested. "What did you make of the heavenly human? Adopted daughter or seamstress — By ginger! Here's Uncle Jemmy. Hello, Uncle Jemmy! How are you? Looking fit as a fiddle. Years younger than this veteran. Treat me with respect, please; I'm old and war-worn."

Uncle Jemmy put up his tortoise-shell glasses and stared at the boy; took them down, took out his handkerchief and rubbed them; left them swinging on the silk ribbon and dropped the handkerchief. He gazed down at immaculate shoes and appeared to see dust on his gray silk stockings, which he

flicked at with the recovered handkerchief. He stared again at Philip. Finally: "Those roses of yours are immensely better than mine, Margaret. My man is a lazy fool." With that he snatched Philip's hands. "My boy, I'm glad — I'm glad —" he stopped abruptly and discovered more dust on the blameless stockings.

With that Mrs. Landicutt took charge and in two minutes they were talking calmly. Uncle Jemmy seated, stately and cool, as if no soft-heartedness had shipwrecked him.

"We were talking," Philip pronounced in a society manner, "about some salvage of mine — *a* salvage, to be explicit — in the girl line. It seems I salvaged her by heroically sitting in an attic ten hours along of her. I'd clean forgotten. Meggy allows she's the queen of the archangels."

"Have you seen her?" inquired Uncle Jemmy.

"No."

"An extraordinary beauty!" Uncle Jemmy permitted himself to remark, and proceeded at a sharp angle to other topics. "I hear that you're going into philanthropy."

"Social work," Philip amended cheerfully.

Uncle Jemmy smiled — indulgent, amused.

"It's a departure for a man of our family, but not discreditable. You'll come back to the business. There's a large amount of money in steel in the next decade."

"I don't need any more money," Philip stated.

Uncle Jemmy lifted his eyebrows. "That's a contradiction in terms," he spoke gently, in his clean-cut, cultivated tones. "Everybody needs more money, as long as there is more." Then, with a visible effort at shifting to the boy's point of view: "If you wish to be philanthropic, my lad, the safest way is to amass a large fortune and use it for charitable purposes. Some of it," qualified Uncle Jemmy.

"We've got a large fortune, Meggy and I, already amassed. The point is how to get rid of most of it."

"Get rid — good Lord!"

"Uh-huh," Philip nodded. "Uncle Jemmy, look at it the way it is. I haven't come out of this six months the same as I went in. It would take me a week to explain, and then you'd think I was dotty, so I'll cut that out. But I'm no American Hohenzollern any more — I don't believe in the divine right of a Landicutt to all the chances."

"What!" demanded an outraged Uncle Jemmy.

"I don't. I'm going to do my prettiest to give some other chaps a chance, who have as good a right as I. You see" — Philip cleared his throat, and a slow red flushing his thin face showed that he was doing a hard thing; he went on in tones a bit wooden for the effort it was to get them out — "you see, one day when I was rather close to death I made a promise. I promised — the Lord — that if I should have my life back I'd use it to do His work on earth. And I've got it back. And a gentleman keeps his promise. Gentleman!" He laughed a little. "I thought I'd got beyond that old shibboleth."

"Old shibboleth!" Uncle Jemmy was distinctly offended.

"Oh, I don't mean" — Philip smiled with that newly acquired old-young smile which brought out the deep lines and the radiance of his tired eyes — "I don't mean I want to be a bounder, Uncle Jemmy. Only — there's a thing a cut higher than a gentleman. And a common man can be that. I know." He was thinking of Lefty.

"So you've turned religious, have you?" Uncle Jemmy inquired sharply. Philip

nodded and felt his mother's fingers. "You'd call it that," he said.

"You really believe that some Unseen Power made a bargain with you: 'I'll swap your life for a promise to be My servant'?"

Philip considered, his mind now on that tremendous hour by the Yser, and not on Uncle Jemmy. "'Some Unseen Power' — that's it. But a Power — great Scott! a Power! I don't know about swapping; the bargain was my feeble idea. But I made a promise, and I'll keep it. I was lifted — out of the depths. Some things a person knows without reasoning. If you get very far down and are pulled out you learn that. You pass by other roads than reason to some solutions. Maybe they include reason, those straight, hidden ways — I don't know. Brains aren't built to know. But the things that matter — love and faith and the hope of eternity — we have to accept with precious little help from reason. We've got to resign ourselves to that, consciously or unconsciously."

Uncle Jemmy rose to his distinguished height — scornful, dignified. "Since you have become a mystic, Philip," he stated, "you and I will have less in common. I never appreciated mysticism. I hope, at least,

you'll take no irretrievable steps with your fortune. Don't let him, Margaret," he appealed. Philip's head went back in a shout of boyish laughter and a crutch fell rattling.

"Me a mystic!" he flung at the older man. "Holy Mike! Uncle Jemmy, you're the droll one. Why, bless you, sir, I'm going in for the most practical things ever heard of — Meggy's keen about it. A wonderful girls' club for her and a boys' for mine; why, you'll be in it heart and soul in six months yourself."

He made a skillful dive for the crutch on the floor and caught it and swung himself to his feet, and the two tall men, with the family look — strong, alike, different — in the faces, stared at each other.

And with that Uncle Jemmy's glance fell on the crutches, and then wandered back to the curved young cheeks, the burning, smiling eyes. His look softened. He put a hand on the boy's shoulder.

"My lad," he said, "it really doesn't matter what you do or think. What matters is, that we've got you back. Throw away your money — there's a margin; believe in a dozen religions ——"

"I do," smiled Philip.

"Only get strong ——"

There was a light sound. Philip swung about on his crutches. A tall girl in white stood in the wide doorway; a pile of astonishing bright hair appeared to radiate light; dark eyes gazed, blazed toward Philip; the young face, oval, childlike, seemed yet to have known all the sorrow of life; the face of a child, of a martyr. It was as if a stained-glass window swimming with sunlight sent down one of its tall angels to stand in the doorway.

With that she was close, and he knew her now, his "salvage," the forgotten little girl of the attic of Dixmude. Her eyes shining almost on a level with his eyes, she gazed at him, and her face grew slowly luminous till Philip remembered that his mother had said that the child was "heavenly."

"One does not say 'Thank you,' for such things like as you have done." She began to speak in a low tone yet with the fire of the eyes through the halting words. "You saved my life; it is much. You fought for Belgium; that is more. You who did not have, who were safe and of good honor here, you went to that dreadful place and fought because you were so great big-hearted. You

threw away your life — oh, many times! — for us, and for the rightness; it is that to be a hero. And every Belgian owes you — I owe you — the life for you to use."

She stopped, and the three people, wordless, stared at her. To the tall boy on crutches there came suddenly, not phrased, not recognized, but overpoweringly sweet, on the fringe of his consciousness as yet, the dawn of a knowledge. This face which he had forgotten, this illuminated, racked young face, with the unbeaten soul looking from it, the soul which like his own had "gone through fire and come out unscarred" — this girl's face might be for him

> . . . the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium.

The soft voice went on: "I am glad I owe you my life. I will be your servant with gladness for as long time as you live."

And suddenly Philip, swaying on his crutches, felt with an astonishing thrill the clasp of hands about his ankles, looked down once again at a bright head against his feet.

"Good heavens!" groaned Philip unhappily. "Oh, don't! Oh — get her up, Uncle Jemmy!"

But it was his mother who lifted her, and the two held together — the two very beautiful women — as his mother put an arm about the girl, laughing, crying.

"Not his servant, dear child. We'll try to find a better way than that."

Uncle Jemmy, refuged from the scene behind his Jacobean chair, folded his arms across the tall back and regarded the group, amused, sardonic, not unsentimental.

"I think it quite likely," observed Uncle Jemmy, "that among us we may find a better way than that."

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